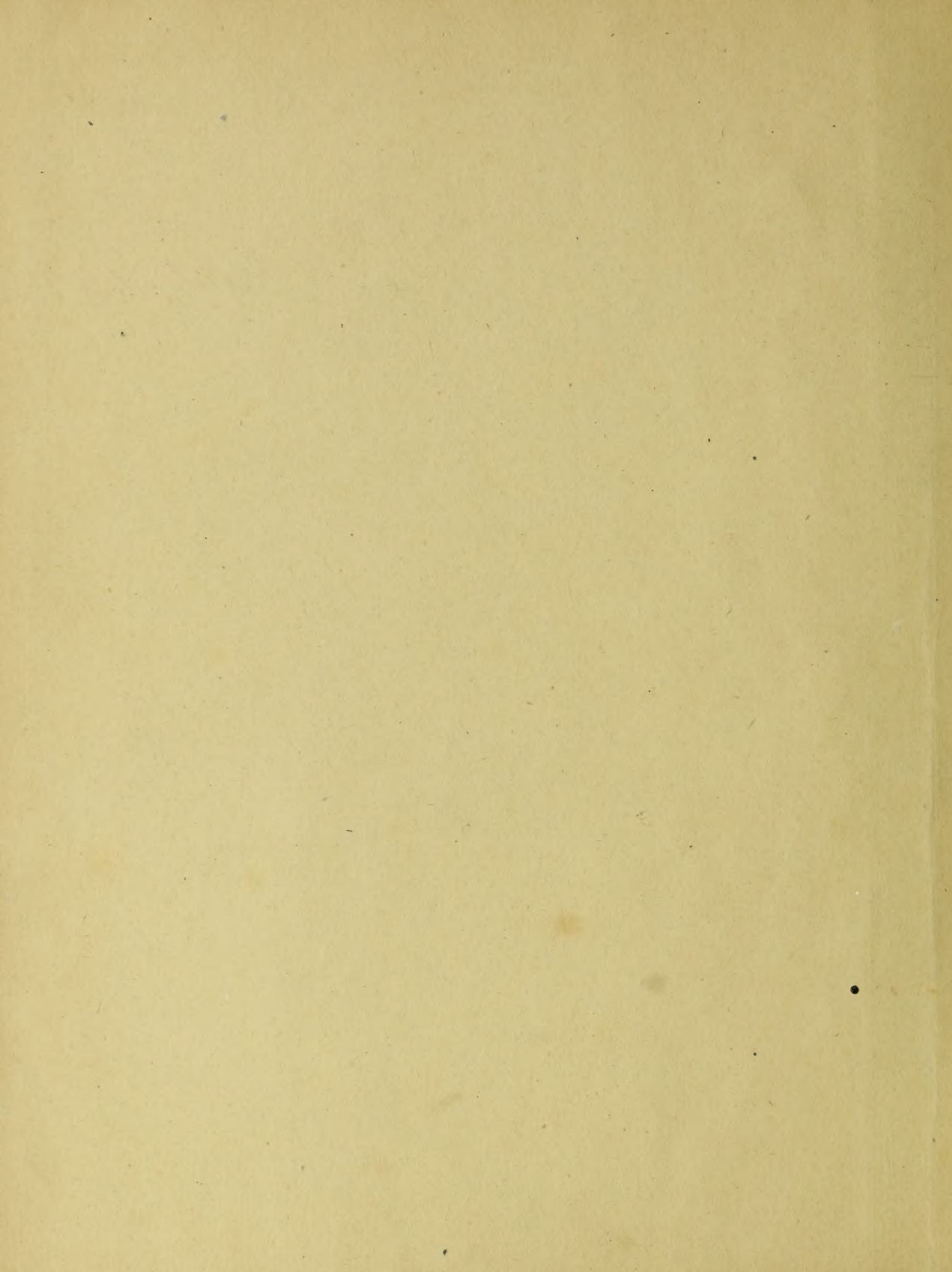


No. _____





22. 956
Private and Confidential

Letter

on the subject of

Prejudice against Colour

amongst

The Society of Friends

in

The United States

By

Sarah M. Grimké

1839.

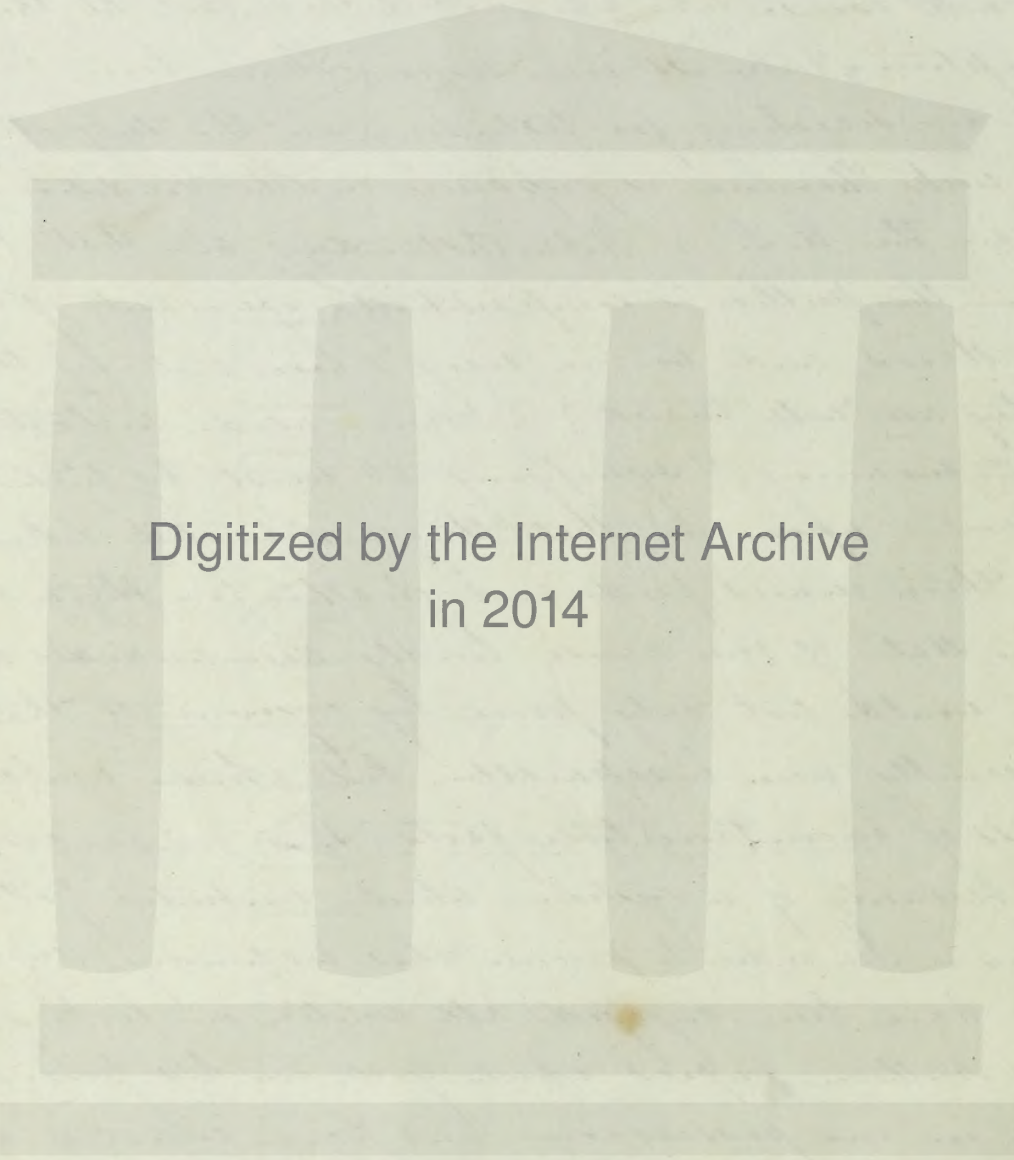
Foot Lane 4th Month 10th 1839.

My dear Friend

I have felt considerable regret at being obliged to leave thy letter so long unanswered, but I trust thou wilt excuse me when I tell thee that at the time of its reception, & almost ever since, I have been busily engaged in searching for testimony on the subject of Slavery, for a work Theodore is preparing on the condition of the Slaves in the U. S. Notwithstanding all that has been written the public is comparatively ignorant of the sufferings of the Slaves, and we are every where met by the assertion that they are "well treated;" a term used without any definite meaning, & signifying at most by those who use the charge upon it, that they are treated like beasts whom their owners feed and clothe for their own benefit.

The state of our cause loudly demanded a work which would not only prove by argument that Slavery and cruelty were inseparable, but which would contain a mass of incontrovertible facts, that would exhibit the horrid barbarity of a system which subverts God's rational creatures - In order to procure this testimony, Angelina and myself have been engaged all winter in looking through files of Southern papers which God, in his providence, placed in our possession, and have collected an abundance of testimony which Theodore has arranged, and I think, with the blessing of the Lord, this work will wake up the nation to renewed & more effectual efforts.

I do not see, as many abolitionists do, that our cause goes on prosperously at present - many circumstances,



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in our actions. I notice with great interest in the
 British Emancipator that a Periodical is likely to
 published in England containing details on the subject of
 Colonization in general, and in particular
 I understand it will contain some of those accounts which
 will be the basis of our becoming subscribers to it,
 I wish to receive it regularly. The British Emancipator may
 read we see possibly in detail, or its present appears to be
 a fine one, notwithstanding the heart-breaking details
 of the attempts to find the faces of liberated Slaves.

In reply to thy questions relative to Abolition and
 Friends I have sketched a reply which Angelina has
 kindly undertaken to copy, and to make some additions
 on another sheet respecting her own exercises & trials.

I regret to learn that thy dear Father is afflicted with
 the gout - I suppose our Graham's reformation has hardly
 reached England as I might recommend you to the
 practice of his system - of abstinence from meat, tea, coffee
 &c as a means of securing the enjoyment of more un-
 interrupted health. Your exemption from such agonizing
 pains on this subject is yet in its infancy & has many
 chances of difficulty to encounter like all other reformation.
 I hope thy next letter will bring more favorable accounts of
 his health -

We rejoice to hear that George Thompson is devoting the
 energies of his mind & the powers of his eloquence to the cause
 of the crushed East Indian - May the Lord prosper his work,
 and open a fountain of sympathy in Britis hearts that
 will never be closed! What a privilege to be engaged in
 labouring for the oppressed! I often think if the Slaves are
 never emancipated, we are richly rewarded by the hallowed

fluence of abolition principles on our own hearts.

The parcel referred to containing William Scott's work
is not come to hand, but I am still in hopes of receiving
it - I have not seen the work & anticipate the benefit of
it with much satisfaction. It is cause of thankfulness
when sins are brought to light, because then there is hope
a remedy may be applied -

It is very relative to J. J. G. "has he recommended in
your report on the subject of missions, saying that
I have heard of. If he has among others, they would
carefully conceal it from us, lest we might receive it as
a word of encouragement. An English friend James S.
Lester wrote to J. J. G. desiring to his arrival in this country
and sent the letter to J. J. G. to read him immediately on
landing, informing him of the state of things in our society,
& exhorting him to stand firm & not let the cause of
the slave. His remonstrance must have been unavailing, as
he has never in any public meeting, or meeting for Discipline
pleaded the cause of the suffering and the dumb - When
he was at Andover, Mass. last summer, he was requested
to attend the celebration of the 1st of Augt., he was sitting
with Moses Stuart when the invitation was given, he
declined it saying he had done as great deeds for the cause
in his own country - Mr. S. said with great solemnity & emphasis
"That's right Mr. Gurney, that's right Mr. Gurney". The name
of Moses Stuart, who is professor of Sacred Literature in
Andover Theological Seminary, is probably known to thee as
one of the most fierce & bitter opponents of the abolitionists,
he has avowed his belief in print, that slavery is a
institution, & is upheld by slave holders as the supporter of
their bloody system on Bible grounds, he was a son who is

a professor in a Southern university, & who married a slaveholder — We have not been able to obtain an interview with J. J. G., we have mentioned to several friends our desire to see him, but he may not have heard of it. As we understand he wished to meet with us, we sent him an invitation through a friend to come & pay us a visit, but as such an independent act would hurt our standing in the society, I doubt his having moral courage to do it. A very intimate friend of ours asked her husband's advice seriously as to whether she should do so. He intimated with us, as friends thought she should, he refused certainly not, but this far she has manifested no inclination to show favour or friendship to her proscribed abolition friends. — So that J. J. G. would certainly incur some risk of losing his popularity — William Basset told me he endeavoured to draw him into conversations on the subject of abolition, but he evidently avoided entering upon it.

Please explain to me how it is that the 16,000 slaves in the Mauritius are still held in bondage, it is one of the crown colonies, and I supposed that an imperial mandate had broken every fetter in them — The mist is belled with success when I think of your every lesson, mistress of the noblest people in the world, I hold in her hands a moral scepter which might sway the universe, she seems to be regardless of the claims of millions & to surrender herself to the guidance — of the children of this world. How much she might do for woman, for virtue, & for the world, if she would rise superior to the opinions of men & cast aside the few yaws of royalty & the caprices of fashion, & stand forth a woman & a queen, an universal, intelligent & responsible being, acting in all things as

I have been greatly disappointed in the "Narrative" by H. Martineau, it is full of errors, I should think from my recollection that in at least half the circumstances she has narrated there are misrepresentations, for instance brother Garrison never was at college, we never liberated any slaves - neither of us ever owned any, I have written an account of our connections with slavery which went the rounds of the U. S. papers when we were in Mass. I we hoped would present one having the credit of doing what we never did - I never legally held a slave, my Mother gave me a little African girl in 1805 or 6 when I was about 15 years old, as is common at the South: she died before I came of age - her history though short is full of interest, & sometimes I hope to commit it to paper for publication - In the year 1829 Angelina, who is 12 years younger than I am, received in like manner from Mother (Father being then deceased) a woman to wait upon her; she found she did not need her services & hired her out. when the man came to pay the wages she felt as if she could not take the money; conscience told her she had not earned it & she gave it to the girl's employer. She has often mentioned a proof of the blinding effects of slavery that she did not see that as the slave earned the money it was her undoubted right to have it, although she could not receive it herself. She returned to Mother in a few months beginning to feel that slavery was a sin, but still her perception was not so clear as to show her that she ought not to return a human being into bondage - Since she has been converted to the high & holy principles of abolition, she has endeavored to

~ I shall now

write *

* The person here referred to is a coloured female

black

redeem her & her children at any price, but this woman
to whom Mother sold her after A. returned her, does not even
deign a reply to the proposal - We regret much the various
mistakes into which Sister has fallen, but it may be some
her testimony on other subjects, we regret but the over-zeal
patience she has shown of the sacrifices & sufferings of abolition-
ists, a martyr has not yet fallen in our cause, our martyr,
if brother George had not died with arms in his hands -
to the advantage of our cause so highly esteemed our
abolitionists, those of us who feel how weak are the instu-
ments used by omnipotence in this glorious work, say to
those who offer such incense - "Have mercy upon us, we are
men of like passions with yourselves -"

There are many other topics I want to mention but must
remember patience has an end, so I will pass on without
commenting on J. Sturge's capital letter, Free labour goods &c &c
and try to answer thy enquired question in some degree
against colour in the society of Friends. - I enclose a letter
from Sarah Douglas to William Battet. I have not time to
copy it, & an addition, I am willing thou shouldst see it from
in our hands. - There is a bench set apart for the coloured
people in our meetings, but there is no record of it on our
minutes: this is the case both in the city & the country, as
far as I know. In the city, there is a committee "to sit
among the youth, & keep order in the meeting", provide seats for
strangers &c. - A part of this committee have the charge of the
coloured bench. I still have seen white persons occasionally
sitting on it, either from ignorance or ^{for the sake of} convenience; but
never near the proscribed class, except a crowded meeting,
undered it unavoidable. Catherine W. Morris an elder
with whom we boarded, & to whom we mentioned our
feelings, it seems the coloured people think respected, she & she

Bank [New Paragraph]

the part under which there is a lot with work
to be left bank.

[New Paragraph]

thought "there ought to be such a seat," & I had her tell the white
 girl who lived with us, & who sat there, because it was near
 the door, that she must not sit on that bench, it was in-
tended for the colored people. - [Miss Crum, who is a dearly
 beloved friend of ours - an abolitionist, & the only individual
 except a young man, who has the moral courage to identify
 herself with the few colored persons who attend our meetings,
 by sitting with them, has been repeatedly told, not to sit
 on ^{that} "that bench was for the colored people". At one time,
 in North's meeting, she was requested to move her seat, but
 declined doing so. - S. Douglas mentioned it thus, in a
 letter to me, dated April 15, 1838. "We have all been to
 North's meeting this morning, & dear Miss sat with us. At the
 moment I saw her - Ah! they will not let me sit at
 meetings through with us - so it is - Mary A. Davis,
 in a vessel came in, & seated herself at the end of the
 bench, as usual I suppose; and expressing she leaved
 our Mother & myself, & said to her, "Come off this bench my
 dear, it is set up exclusively for the colored people".
Miss replied, "I always sit with them" - Miss spoke to
 friend after meeting, & told her that she knew the bench
 was designed for the colored people, but that some of
 them suffered deeply on account of being thus separated,
 & therefore, she felt it her duty to sit ^{with} ~~near~~ them". She
 replied, "that ^{it was no} ~~is no~~ excuse, she disturbed the order of the
 meeting" &c. [In a letter from S. D. dated March 3rd 39. in
 answer to my request, she states the following, which her
 Mother related to me at the time, but I find to trust
 my memory. Mother does not recollect distinctly the
 circumstance that occurred at the New York meeting, but
 thinks this is the substance. After she had been in
 meeting some time, a friend came in & sat by her, & said,

[Handwritten signature]

her when she could with. Mother said she did not like well
any more. Her friend then said, that the coloured people
set up stairs, as friends do not like to sit by the colour?
and said, she had no objection herself to sit by her,
but that when she chose again, she had better sit up stairs.
She did not go to the meeting again, she was attending
the Women's ^{Abolitionary} ~~Committee~~ in N. Y. 1837, & was a stranger there.
It was the first time she ^{had} attempted to go to friends' meeting
there. [About 18 months ago, an aged friend, James Snowden,
a minister of North Meeting, with the Douglas family,
with whom her daughter was ~~permanently~~ ^{permanently} associated were invited
to the funeral - I give another extract from P. D's letter.
"When Mother got to the house, she was invited by the
women in attendance, to look at the corpse; but declining
she was shown into the front parlour, which was then un-
occupied. After sitting there some time, three friends came
in and as she sat with her back to the door, they did
not perceive that she differed from them in complexion,
however, before they reached the seat near her, they discovered
who it was, & started as from a road - The room was nearly
filled with members of North Meeting, the meeting place James Douglas
(constantly attends) several of them friends who sit in the
gallery. They took no notice of Mother, but felt that the
colouration spirit was at work, & their scandalous countenance
told her, her presence was disagreeable - When the
funeral was about leaving the house, one of the women
asked her - "Is this going to walk with James Draper or Alfida?
two coloured, bound boys?" I expect to walk with my husband
told her reply. "No, then does?" she passed on to her carriage.
All the women, even the servants of the family, were put
into carriages, ^{but} Mother was left to walk. She was the only
woman that walked. My very spirit is filled with indignation

[New Paragraph]

[New Paragraph]

In private, I would rather have died than gone to that funeral. The men looked on smilingly, and father unmovable, but mother felt that it was right to go, although her heart was bleeding with the wounds inflicted by disfellowship friends. In a letter dated April 16. 37. S. D. says, [When I was in New York (where she kept ^a school) I found it harder to bear the cross of going among friends, because I was alone, & of the women of the meeting no one, save Sarah Wood, who was an honorable exception, spoke to me. I had been attending one month, when a friend recosted me thus - "Does this go on a house cleaning?" I looked at her with astonishment, my eyes filled with tears, & I answered "no". "What does this do thee?" "It hurts ^a school -" "Oh, then this letter off" - judge what were my feelings! a stranger, in a strange land! think of the time, the place, and this the first salutation received in a house consecrated to him, who hath made of one floor all his rational creatures! - The friend spoke to me as she came into meeting, I wept during the whole of that meeting, & for many succeeding sabbaths, & believe they were not the tears of wounded pride alone?"

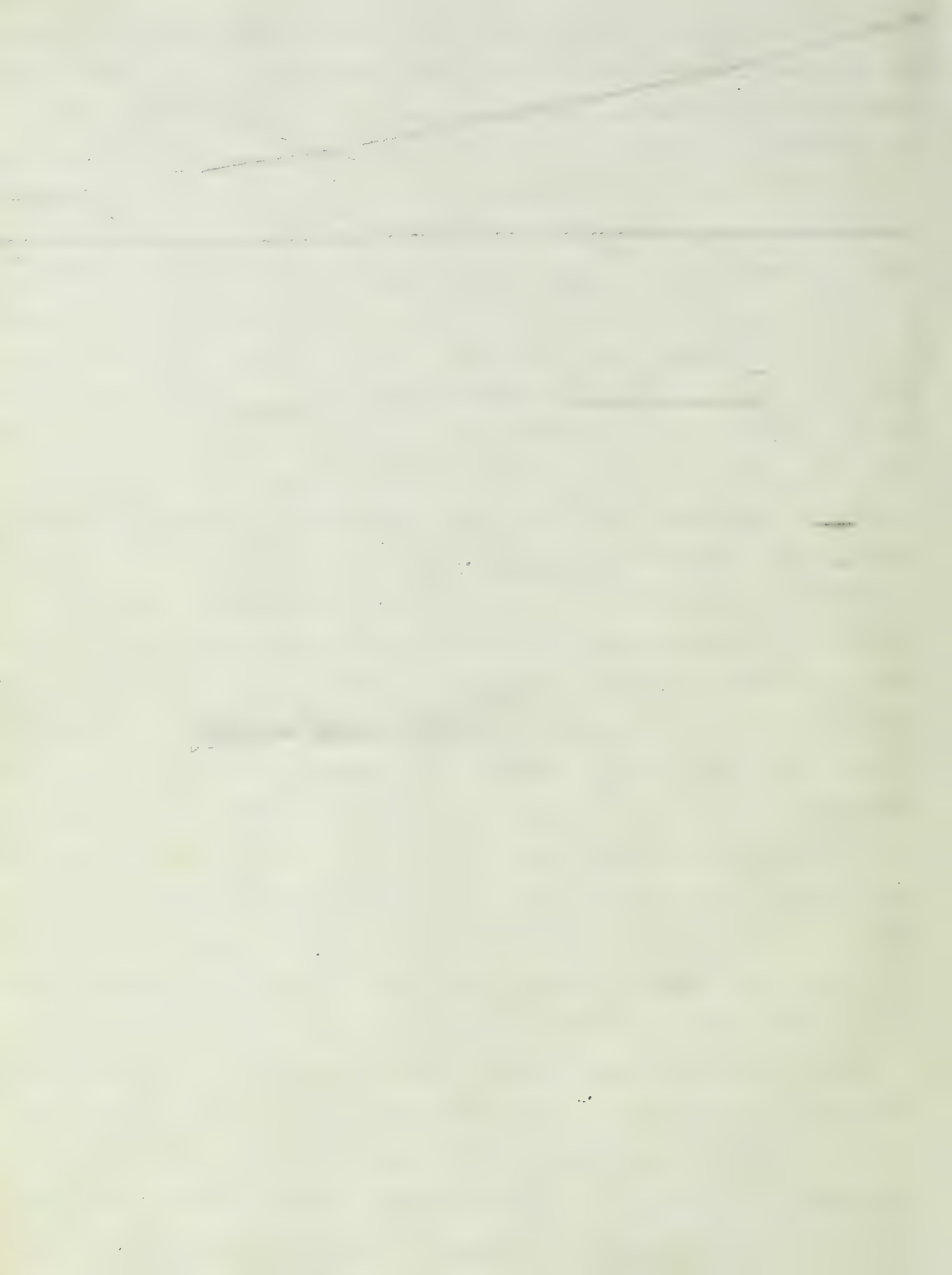
[Soon after Sarah went to N. Y., I spoke to a minister belonging to the meeting she attended, - placed in her hands some of S. D.'s letters expressive of her lonely feelings, and her sufferings from the prejudice against her on account of her complexion and denied her to visit her & soothe her lacerated feelings. She promised to go, but never went. The distance, it is true, was considerable, but had she felt for her, she would not have omitted so plain a duty to a suffering sister. - I might add many similar circumstances, but one more shall suffice. In a letter from Mina Green dated Philad. 3rd Month 18th 1839. "The day the new meeting was opened (some time last year) I saw three

a few colored men come to me of the doors, & all before
 venturing to enter, they were exceedingly well dressed, & drove
 slowly, uncertainly supposed, where the prescribed seat was.
 and no seat presenting itself near the door, they stood looking
 about for one. at this crisis, instead of any one rising
 as they would have done for strangers of their own complexion,
 (for the meeting was not pressed for room) one or two ^{men} ^{rose}
 & instead of taking them through the meeting to the
 bench appointed for them, which was not ^{very} distant,
^{they} went to the door, and motioned, or led the men out, & sent
 the yard, to another door, & there pointed them to their
 place, which is in a convenient & comfortable part of the
 house. I asked this dear child to write out this, & some
 other facts, & allow me to use her names, ^{with the former} she ^{complacently} ^{says}—
 "with respect to using my name, there appears to
 me to be great inconsistency in my sending a testimony
 across the Atlantic, against the sins of a people with
 whom I have never labored in godly simplicity, on
 account of the sin testified against. ~~but I do not~~
~~write with William Beattie & myself of God speak~~".

Anna is a precious girl, of a remarkably tender spirit,
 & as these are her feelings, I wish her name not to be used
 publicly. Leah Douglas in reply to a similar request
 says "Mother thinks it would not be for us to mention
 names, as it would implicate some who stand high
 in the church, & others who have had the name of
 being our best friends. I think the exposure of names
 would bring upon us the charge of imposture, and
 that we should have to endure better persecutions
 without effecting any good, because I believe friends in this
 country are a ~~very~~ ^{very} few, are given over to a reprobate mind."

Handwritten signature or mark, possibly "Kemp".

~~I do, indeed, you would like to have a copy of my letter to~~
~~Wm Bassett, I will furnish it with pleasure, my Father~~
~~knows I desire to to my duty in this matter "the~~
~~spirit truly is willing but the flesh is weak".] [It is so~~
~~and, I will be brought up in a different spirit~~
~~and credit, as they never had been brought to read~~
~~left off attending our meetings after our removal to Philad.~~
~~and I had been invited to go to our meetings, but he and other~~
~~friends in Philad. did not like it was people to go to their~~
~~meetings. [Since I recd of the mother of Sarah who has been~~
~~10 years convinced of the principles of Friends, - has adopted~~
~~their dress & language, & goes to their meetings constantly,~~
~~has been advised not to apply to be received into member-~~
~~ship as she would be rejected. This advice has been given~~
~~in tenderness, to spare her feelings; but I regret that she~~
~~obeyed it; because I am willing we should set out our~~
~~feelings towards this oppressed class. She has mentioned~~
~~this to me with deep feeling, & remarked, - "The hardest~~
~~lesson my Heavenly Father ever set me to learn, was to~~
~~love friends; and in simplicity of spirit I have often queried,~~
~~why the Lord should require me to go among a people, who~~
~~despise me on account of my complexion; but I have seen~~
~~that it is designed to humble me, & to teach me the lesson~~
~~"love your enemies, & pray for them who despitefully use~~
~~you". She does not sit in the benches in the back of the~~
~~meeting, set apart for coloured persons; her age & respectability,~~
~~I suppose, have induced some friends to invite her to~~
~~sit on a bench extending the whole length of the side of~~
~~the meeting house, against the wall. Other persons sit on~~
~~that bench, but except at crowded meetings, no one sits near her.~~



[
Angelica
I
myself
returned
to
Philad.
in
the
Spring
of
37,
we
took
us
places
by
Grace,
believing
that
God
required
us
thus
to
identify
ourselves
with
her,
I
bear
the
silent
witness
against
the
wicked
superstition
that
existed
in
our
society.

~~That~~
~~and~~
~~some~~
~~months~~
~~before~~
When
the
overseers
visited
us,
they
remonstrated
with
us
about
it,
in
reply
to
our
statement,
that
we
did
it
from
a
sense
of
duty,
they
replied
-"There
was
no
occasion
to
set
so
near
to
her"

This
beloved
mother
in
Israel
has
suffered
deeply
&
patiently
a
long
from
this
most
injust
treatment.
Although
her
self
and
her
family
have
for
many
years
been
known
among
friends
and
highly
respectable
well
educated
persons,
there
is
not
a
family
with
whom
they
are
on
terms
of
social
inter-
course
equality,
except
a
few
abolitionists.
They
are
visited
sometimes
by
a
few,
just
as
we
visit
the
poor,
because
they
are
near,
without
any
idea
of
interchanging
the
hospitalities
of
friendship.
[
An
excellent
man
of
undoubted
piety,
who
had
lived
many
years
in
the
family
of
an
elder
of
our
meeting,
requested
to
be
received
into
membership.
He
was
rejected.
An
overseer
of
that
meeting,
told
Angelina,
that
the
only
reason
was,
because
he
was
coloured;
for
his
character
as
a
religious
man
was
unquestioned,
and
he
was
fully
convinced
of
our
principles.
This
thing
was
done
privately,
and
it
elicited
no
contamination
that
I
know
of.

[
When
we
were
in
Mass^{achusetts},
an
abolitionist,
whose
parents
were
friends,
told
us
that
a
coloured
man
was
offered
hired
to
work
on
their
farm;
that
there
was
a
bowl,
plate,
spoon
kept
for
his
special
use,
&
that
the
family
would
no
more
have
thought
of
using
them,
than
if
a
cat
or
dog
had
come
with
them
-
Such
said
she
are
the
prejudices
I
was
educated
in,
I
have
found
it
hard
work
to
overcome
them.

44

It is a young and an interesting little girl had sent to Bentley
Thompson some papers I think to be educated in Philadelphia.
She was so nearly white that she might have passed for a
white child. W.S. Foster, though a colonizationist, had not
as deep prejudices as most others, and was very anxious to get
her charge into a school where she might not be identified
with the colored class, & where she would have better
opportunities of learning than in the colored schools. She
applied to get her admitted into several schools under the
care of friends, even into for poor children of other denominations,
but in vain; & having, I heard, that she had been with her
that she had been compelled to place her in a colored
free school under the care of friends. Although her father,
a rich man, was anxious to give her a liberal education.
Dr. D. was one of the most liberal & influential members, a
minister of high reputation, but all her influence was
unavailing. [The mission was not the sentiment of
Foster, but it has not created there, in the days of
John Adams - this same prejudice existed. Joseph
Whitgate a valuable minister of Brooklyn, New Jersey, told
us that in Mount Holly meeting, N.J. a committee was
appointed to bring forward the names of persons suitable
for Admission; they met several times, but could not find one
any one; and at length, reported so to the meeting. J. W. was
then on the committee I think, but whether he was or not, he told
him, there was no objection in that meeting, & he ought to be
admitted - for he was the only one proposed for that
high & holy office, viz, the black man - who sat behind the
pulpit, but they preferred going without an adder, to having
one - ~~They better it to have some object to fall off
the set off of black, to let it upon against them now to be
to it. It's all for the rest of this subject -~~



The following is a letter from Mr. Douglas. The narrative it contains, is so interesting, that I copy the whole of it; my visit to my Mother, to which she makes allusion, was a precious season to me. I was thankful to be there.

Philadelphia, April 7 1837.

My dear Father,

You ask me for some account of my beloved Mother, and his heart, it is a saying blessing them, & I hasten to tell you what I can recollect.

My Mother Charles was naturally sensitive, & felt more keenly than any of us, the prejudice against colour; but most of all the conduct of professing Christians as a stumbling-block to him, particularly their behaviour in their meeting houses to our people. It drove him to the very verge of infidelity. Many times, stung almost to madness by their contempt, he has been ready to curse them, & in the bitterness of his heart exclaimed "there is no reality in religion, 'tis all a fable, or why do Christians act thus?" When quite a child, he with the rest of the family, went to friends meetings, but as he grew to man's estate, the ~~case~~ ^{cross} of being seated on the back bench on account of his complexion, was too heavy to bear, & with Mother's permission, he went to meetings with Father, among the Presbyterians, & it was an impost however that he did not grow in grace, & in the knowledge of our Lord & Saviour Jesus Christ; and his constant reply, when spoken to on religious subjects, was "tis all a fable; if it is not, why do the people act thus?" He continued in this state of mind until his 14th year, when it pleased the Lord to lay on him the rod of affliction.

his health declined, his lion like temper was subdued, and he became a little child in weakness, he no longer scoffed & jested at the conduct of Coleridge, but frowned in secret over their unkindness. The church of which my father was a member, was without a pastor, on Sabbath morning, a little company assembled in the church to read the scriptures & to pray, and for the two last years of his life my dear Charles was a constant attendant, kindly assisting the aged & infirm of his own people, by reading the scriptures to them, & so carefully did he conceal from his left hand what his right was doing, that many of his friends knew nothing of it until he had ceased to live and breathe. As his bodily strength decreased, his mind turned towards the society of Friends, to the religion of his childhood; but he stumbled at the cross, & went away sorrowful. A few months before his death, Mother accompanied him to Burlington, for change of air, & once or twice he went with her to Friends' meetings, I found comfort in going, & remarked "If they did not advise me so, I should like to go always". Oh, if Friends only knew the anguish this one command's expression of their "This bench is for the black people", "This bench is for the people of colour", inflicts on the sensitive & tender consciences, if they knew how it shuts up the springs of life, and causes us to turn away from their meetings weary and unrefreshed, they would not, they could not use it so often. Oh! surely the darkness that might be felt has enveloped their minds on this point.

I had been at home just one week when Charles was stretched on his sick bed, never to leave it in life. He

Here insert

The following is a copy of a letter from —
in Philadelphia to Mr. B. [unclear] an overseer in the
Society, at Lynn, Massachusetts.

It is, vol. 37

and throwing his arms round my neck he pressed his lips to
 my forehead & prayed, "Oh Lord grant my dear Mother & Sister
 as full an assurance of their acceptances. The next day our
 message of acceptance was given down - we were all joyful
 principalities nor powers, things present nor things to come,
 shall ever be able to separate us from the love of God in
 Christ Jesus." No cloud arose after this to hide his Lord from
 one moment from his eyes, & on the morning of the 1st of
 September 1835 he fell asleep, sweetly murmuring "Come Lord
 Jesus come quickly".

During the whole of his illness, his intellect shone out
 strong & clear, so that our neighbours & friends did greatly
 marvel, & when the cold grave had hidden him from our
 view - testimonials of his moral worth, his cultivated understand-
 ing, & affectionate disposition, were in every way
 could not but rejoice that our Lord was so long a
 our suffering from the suffering inflicted by social injustice
 & the varied trials which seem to numberless. - His death
 has left an aching void & nature demands her tears.

We miss him when the Lord is spread;
 We miss him when the prayer is said;
 Upon our dreams his dying eyes
 In still & unobtrusive goodness see.

Please excuse inaccuracies, as I have been interrupted frequently.
 Your sympathy is invaluable - I am, the Lord will - ever
 your affectionate friend

Wm. H. Griffin
 New York

Tenderly yours

Geo. W. Coe

I have omitted the reference of my visit to the ... as well
 copying the account, I found it did not bear the ...
 15th - With respect to that part of thy letter concerning the
 Society of Friends, I have delayed replying to it, because I wished
 to communicate on the subject with a friend of mine in
 Philadelphia & another in Lyane Mass. that I might obtain some facts

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which would exhibit the state of ^{the} Society respecting Abolition &
Prejudice. From my coloured friend in Philad. I receive a
letter written by him to Tom Bisset who is the present minister
in Lyone, & who will I hope, ere this reaches thee here, put
thee in possession of sundry facts relating to the enquiries.
He was regarded as a very promising & virtuous member of our
Society, & was so highly esteemed that he was introduced earlier
than is usual into offices of trust & responsibility. I regard
his case as cleared & more important than our own, because
Friends had declared unequivocally, by placing him in office
what they thought of him, & because he was not by any means
enfringed the Discipline - Since our becoming Abolitionists
& leaving Philad. in the fall of 1836 to go to New York, we have
been so little among Friends that few facts have come to
our knowledge; we have therefore nothing to offer but our own
experience in the case, & we know no better way than to send
you a narrative of the circumstances connected with it.

From early childhood we both felt much on the subject
of slavery; the sufferings & degraded condition of the negroes
aroused our compassion & these feelings were still
strengthened, when our hearts were touched by the power of
the gospel, & we began to feel for them as immortal beings.
As we met with little sympathy in ^{South} Carolina, we rejoiced
when we found that the Quakers, of whose doctrines & principles
we had hitherto been ignorant, regarded Slaves as sinful,
& that they had had their Workshops & their Benevolence & had
finally abolished Slavery among themselves. We examined
their views, & were fully persuaded they were nearer to the
Bible standard than those of any other religious sect, & we
naturally desired to enjoy the privileges of membership, believing
it right to be united to some body of professing Christians.
We accordingly left our native land, & rendered ourselves to us

the horrible effects of Slavery, & joined in society & joined in
 Philad. expecting to find here, as in other parts of the country
 the same feelings & sentiments; but we found them perfectly dead on the subject & insen-
 sible to the fact, that as citizens of this United States they
 were participating in the guilt of Slavery if they did not openly
 rebuke it. We found that many of them were engaged in
 the cotton trade, & that so far from labouring to destroy the
 system, they were joining their efforts with the most strenuous
 friends of oppression; that although the enslaving of our
 fellow men was prohibited by our discipline, the spirit of
 Slavery still lived amongst ^{them}, in the form of prejudice
 against colour for that the idea of equal rights was as odious
 to Friends as to others.

Our visitations have been gradually unfolded to us as
 our intercourse with Friends increased, & withered the cherished
 hope that we had united ourselves to those who were labouring
 in the great cause of Human Freedom — The subject of
 Slavery was rarely mentioned, when it was, it elicited little
 interest & the Slaveholder seemed to be the permanent object
 of sympathy. Aspain took possession of our minds, & finding
 that nothing was done we concluded nothing could be done
 to break the Southern's chains, although we never ceased to feel
 for his sufferings. The Colonization's Scheme claimed a passing
 notice but we were convinced as that it could exert no
 influence in Colonizing Slaves & without realizing the
 absurdity of the plan of expatriation we soon abandoned it.
 We were in this State when a friend of ours went
 from Philad in 1833 to spend the winter in Carolina. ^{The}
 exercise of mind through which she passed on account of
 Slavery whilst there by me with some facts detailed in her
 letters to me, revived with great strength the conflict of feeling

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through which we had passed whilst in the midst of these
abominations. Angelina's soul was deeply moved & the prayer
of her heart continually was "Lord what wilt thou have me to do".
She felt that she had a work to do but her path seemed com-
pletely ~~closed~~ ^{closed} up on every side. Whenever she ventured to express
her feelings to our elderly friends, she was told that the Meeting
for Sufferings had the charge of this weighty matter, and that
whenever the way opened, they would do all that friends
could do. All individual effort on her part was discouraged.
At this time the Anti-Slavery trumpet first sounded in our ears,
the direct opposition of ^{the} ~~the~~ ^{presented} ~~presented~~ ^{us}, for a season,
from examining the principles of the abolitionists; we only
heard of them as men filled with the spirit of denunciation,
the inevitable result of whose efforts would be insurrection
& blood. But notwithstanding this, as ^{Angelina} ~~she~~ could find no relief
to her burdened mind among Friends, she was induced by
a Friend of hers to read a few of the Anti-Slavery publications,
& became convinced that the Abolitionists had been grossly
slandered. She found to her surprise that their principles
were her principles, & that they were the men & women with
whom she could work for the slave.

Things were in this posture when our beloved Brother Thomas
died 16th Month - 34 - this event introduced us to the notices of
some of his intimate friends & correspondents in the Northern
States, & thus brought us in contact with that spirit of phil-
anthropy which was diffusing itself through the public mind.
It made us acquainted with some who were engaged in
the great moral enterprises of the day, & afforded them an
opportunity of soliciting our aid & exhibiting the claims of
these moral reforms upon our efforts as Christians. Among
those with whom we became acquainted in this way was
Mr. Todd with whose name thou art probably familiar as the

bring to bear in this country of the Massachusetts. The church
 essentially desirous to exhibit us in its behalf & the deep in-
 terest which brother J. had taken in it increased its claims
 upon us. I proposed forming a Peace Society among Friends,
 this was objected to, because the interference was in the hands
 of other people, & Friends must keep themselves separate from
 other sects. The exclusive & sectarian spirit, manifested on this
 occasion, chafed & grieved us - I next wanted to become
 one of the board of Managers who visited the Madeglan
 in 1834, there were one or two friends on the Board - this
 was objected to for the same reason. I relinquished it
 because my soul was wedded to the Society, & to be a useful
 member of this part of the church was my chief desire.

During this time ^{Amplius} still continued to be greatly ex-
 ercised about Slavery & attended some meetings, she con-
 sidered my conscience & my liberty to the keeping of Friends
 & therefore went with her only once. I clearly perceived that
 if she became an abolitionist, she would lose caste in the
 Society, & the door of usefulness, as a member, be entirely closed.

I knew the Lord had brought us into the Society by some
 remarkable providences, & it seemed impossible to me that
 it could be right for us to do any thing which would mar
 our usefulness in it. I did what I could to dissuade ^{my sister} ~~her~~
 from going among abolitionists, & to her meeting, and
 declined all invitations to meet with her. She would not
 follow my advice or example yet was by
 attending the meetings he held in Pitts. in the Spring of 1835
 that she became convinced that she could do something for
 the slave, and for the first time affixed her name to an
 Anti Slavery Constitution. C. W. Morris & myself both regretted
 this when she told us what she had done. Still felt that
 Abolition was a great moral subject, yet her request had "pass

Inquiry" - This made me an Abolitionist, but I still forbore the
 expression of my views, (when she wrote her letter 8th Nov. 35
 to W. L. Garrison, which I did not know of till after its publication
 being absent from the city) I mourned over it exceedingly,
 & finding that Friends disapproved of it & of her doing any
 thing in the A. S. cause, I did all that I could by unostentatious
 & entirely to induce her to abandon all active co-operation
 with Abolitionists. (I did the same with respect to my
 beloved Miss Green, who sympathized deeply with A.,
 but blessed be God their principles were too strong to be
 unsettled by me.) I did not want her even to make little
 articles for the A. S. S. with a kneeling slave upon them, she
 has some letters of mine that ~~would do credit to any~~
~~paper~~, desiring her to surrender herself to the guidance
 of Friends, & give up her responsibility as a moral being,
 to be thought of as a dependent upon some person or persons,
 obligations. This was the creed I had been taught & I was
 not an except scholar. But the opposition I thus made
 to her, brought the subject continually before me, and
 at length issued in my own conversion. I was weary of
 seeing her suffer, of seeing her mind embroiled, & her
 common sense arguments against the A. S. doctrine
 that we must not think for ourselves, & see and their affect
 the A. S. but I only. At length I rose with opposition from
 all those whom she had been accustomed to regard as
 her superiors in religious attainments, she resolved to go to
 no more Anti-Slavery Meetings for one year, & then try whether
 she had been indeed in self-will, or really following the
 leadings of the Holy Spirit. She kept her resolutions, & at the
 expiration of that period, went to spend the summer of 1836
 in a very retired part of N. Jersey: she wished next to try to
 effect her entire separation from all exciting causes either pro

we can would produce, & to consider apart from the world what
 the world would have her to do - She had not long been settled
 in her present school at Shrewsbury, with B. & M. Parker an Overseer
 & Minister in one Society, when the earnest petition "Speak, Lord,
 thy servant heareth" was answered by her feeling herself called
 to write her "Appeal to the Christian Women of the South". When
 she returned we saw she was surprised, I rejoiced that she
 had found some rest for her smothered feelings, & all any
 opposition to her engaging in the Anti-Slavery cause ceased;
 and when I received for her a letter from Eliza Wright, Secy
 Cor. Secretary of the Am. A. S. Society, soliciting her to become the
 agent of the Socy - I immediately forwarded it from Philad. &
 stated that I believed it would be right for her to accede to
 the proposition. I joined her in the County in the 8th mo. &
 did all I could to strengthen her for the work I now believe
 she was called of the Lord to do; & after much conflict she
 concluded to accept the agency which only proposed her labouring
 in private circles, but declined receiving any compensation for
 her services.

My own mind had travailed with hers in exercise, but I
 did not breathe to her the least hint that I might accompany
 her, she made up her mind to go in simple faith, & left
 the provision of all things needed to Him who had called
 her. We returned to the city; my mind still uncertain as
 to the path of duty, for I clearly perceived that to be an
 Abolitionist would be to forfeit all my hopes of usefulness
 in the society of Friends. A letter from Mother decided my
 wavering judgment; although opposed to abolitionism, being
 herself a slave holder, her maternal feelings were aroused at
 the prospect of his going on such a mission alone, & she entreated
 me to accompany her. It was like a voice from the Lord, and
 I instantly resolved to do so - His decision met with the most

decided opposition, my dearest friends however were as though I were going on some sinful mission - All that activity & learning could do, was done to turn me from my purpose. Surely their flesh & heart sided me, but God was my strength & He has been my exceeding great reward. Some friends who really loved me, remonstrated with me in great tenderness, but I found they were ignorant of the principles of the abolitionists, & that their prejudice had closed their minds against the reception of truth. One of these, an elder whom I esteemed as a Father said that one cause of his suffering on my account was, that I was going to unite myself with such a people. I enquired whether he had read the writings of abolitionists or was personally acquainted with any of them? He replied, no! & I found that his knowledge was from the reports of their enemies. Our dearest beloved friend Beulah Lusk, although a colonizationist, came to see me, sympathized tenderly in my trials, & told me she could not condemn us, & commended us to the care & protection of him whom she believed we were conscientiously trying to serve. I believe she was the only one who was regarded as eminent in the society who spoke a word of encouragement to us in Philadelphia - Our friends at Worcester entered warmly into our feelings, for they had seen of the travail of our souls.

Previous to setting out for New York where we went in order to attend the convention of the ^{Seventy} Anti Slavery agents we wrote to several of those Elders at whose houses we had been particularly intimate & to some of our own meeting (with one of whom Caleb Pierce we had had very little acquaintance) requesting them to visit us at C. W. Morris's. We believed it would not be right for us to leave Phil^a without informing these friends, when we were going, & unfolding to them something of the exercise, ^{word} ~~and~~ we had passed through before we had made

up our minds to pursue the course we were about entering upon. We knew we should meet with no sympathy from any of them, but we respect for, & gratitude to them - for former kindnesses seemed to demand it. They all came - we told them freely, solemnly & with tears, of our travail of spirit on the Subject of Parting from childhood down to that period - & that after many prayers to our Heavenly Father for direction, & long continued conflict & suffering of mind, we had deliberately come to the conclusion - that it was our solemn duty to become the Agents of the A. S. S. P. - but without any salary - At that time we had no idea of delivering lectures - but we told them all the Lord had then told us.

After sitting awhile, one of them said it was an important matter, & they must consider of it & come together again. We calmly told them that we had stated explicitly that we had requested them to meet us, because we wished to manifest our respect for them, & for the Society of which we were members, & not to ask counsel of them. We had weighed the subject properly; had made up our minds deliberately; & feeling that we had no doubted evidence of the will of the Lord, we felt as if we dared not consult with flesh & blood. They proposed our laying it before the monthly meeting. We remarked that as the Discipline did not require it, we felt under no obligation to do this; besides which, we very well knew what the decisions of the Meeting would be, & feeling, as we did, impelled by a strong sense of duty to undertake the Agency, we could not abide by the decisions of any human tribunal. Under these feelings, we believed it would be better ~~not~~ not to lay our concerns before the Mo. meeting, than to do so, and then act in direct opposition to its decisions. They unanimously expressed disapprobation of our prospect; assigning no other reason, that we can remember, but that Friends did not approve of their members mixing with people

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of other societies, & that as soon as they saw the way open they would act on the subject of Slavery as a body, which was the way in which they always had acted, and the best way. Thomas Weston said he supposed we were aware that we would subject ourselves to disownment. ~~I mentioned Smith's Reply, who he stated had been disowned in England for coming to America on a mission about Slavery.~~ We replied that we did not believe there was any discipline by which we could be disowned, but that we were willing to meet any consequences which might follow from our obeying God rather than man. None of these things moved us, for the Lord was with us, & we parted in ^{kind} feeling.

A few days afterwards we met J. Weston at a Friend's house. He anxiously enquired whether we adhered still to our resolutions, we told him we did; he then observed that we would place Friends in a very painful situation by compelling them to disown us, for actively espousing a cause in which they had themselves been engaged, and which was interwoven with their principles.

When we went to New York we stayed in a family of Presbyterians, a friend there, who had formerly lived in Philadelphia, with whom we had been on the most sisterly terms, did not invite us to make her house our home at this time, although we had met a most cordial reception there, twice before. When we concluded to pass the winter in N. Y., a Presbyterian minister, H. G. L. also, consented to receive us as boarders into his family, here we were treated with the most kindness & hospitality, & so we were at Dr. Cox's during the month we spent with them, previous to our removing to H. G. L.'s. Not a single friend in that city offered us a home, although many of them expressed uneasiness at our staying with Presbyterians.

In the Spring when H. G. L. removed to New Haven, we were

really distressed for a home - In this opportunity we applied to our intimate friend (mentioned above) but she declined receiving us. 1st her step daughter was soon to be married, 2^d house cleaning time was coming on, 3^d yearly meeting, and 4th we would be more comfortable with Abolitionists.

After a search of some weeks, a young couple, friends, but entire strangers to us, agreed to accommodate us with board the few remaining weeks we had to stay in N. Y. I should however say that Friends always treated us kindly whenever they met us at meeting, & frequently invited us to take a meal with them, which we most freely did, for we loved to be among them as much as they were willing to have us. ~~It is really surprising that the true reason why none of them offered us a home was, that they were afraid to identify themselves with us as Abolitionists by so doing.~~

The winter and spring spent in N. York took our Abolitionism most closely. It was a time of deep exercise, for we felt friendless, homeless & forsaken; just entering upon a mighty work, in an untrodden field of labor; but the Lord sustained us. We remember with peculiar feelings of gratitude a visit which we received from ^{them} Friends who lived in the Western parts of the State, & came down to the city whilst we were there. From their intercourse with Friends they found out how painful our situation would be. They were whole-hearted Abolitionists & came to us with all the tenderness & sympathy of Brothers, & with their, insured over our trials, & entreated us to go with them and make their houses our homes as long as we pleased, & assured us that Friends meeting houses in all that region of Country would be open for us to lecture in; as there, they are pretty generally Abolitionists. Such an offer was truly tempting, and all our natural feelings were enlisted in its favour;

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but the Spring was just opening, at which time the roads
are almost impassable. — Thus again we felt bound to attend
the first A. S. conventions of Women in N. Y. These, with some
other reasons, induced us, though reluctant, to give up
the project after some days of deliberation & prayer for
direction — and they were satisfied that our decision was a
right one. — [Previous to going to Mass. in the Spring of
1836 we returned to Phil^a & had not been in the city long
before the Overseers called to see us. We were not in, & they
called again early the next morning, they had several
charges against us, such as attending a few Particular
meetings in New York, & opening our own A. S. meetings with
prayer. We told them in reply to the last charges that
we had no settled rule for ourselves, and as they had
not been present, we did not think they could be
competent judges whether we had been influenced by
the Holy Spirit or not. They however talked more about
our acting contrary to the custom & advice of Friends than
anything else, & on leaving me Edith White Smith, if I persisted
in my present course, I should have to choose between
Discipline & Abolitionism; I promptly replied that my
election was made, & that I was prepared to surrender
my membership if I could only retain it by abandoning
the cause of the slave. — They called again in a few days
& informed us that the men & women overseers had had
a conference & had concluded to take our case to the
preparative meeting. We attempted to reason with them
on the impropriety & unlawfulness of such a course, there
being no discipline to sustain them in it; they told us
they had not come to argue with us, but merely to inform
us of the decisions they had come to, & urged us to resign,

our memberships & not to compel Friends to adopt so painful a course. We told them we did not feel at liberty to resign, because we still believed in the great principles of the Society, & did not feel as if we could join any other people, that upon friends, & not upon us, must rest the responsibility of depriving us of the right of membership; & that if they disowned us, we hoped they would remember it was because we acted up to the most fundamental doctrine of the Society, to follow the leadings of the Holy Spirit in the secret of our souls, which duty was more insisted upon in the sermons we heard in our meetings, than any other.

As our case was not carried to meeting, we suppose they concluded it was best not to do it, as we really had not violated any Discipline. During one of these visits paid us by the members, they earnestly requested that we would not go among friends in New England, ~~as~~ ^{as} they feared our abolition principles would illicit more sympathy & be more acceptable among friends there than in Philad. At this time of our being in Phila Friends generally avoided us, a very few out of a large number of friends & acquaintances called to see us. Mary Kite was among the number, she came, she said, because her mind was burdened on our account; she charged us with having embraced Abolitionism in order to obtain popularity - that we were going a warfare ~~at~~ ^{at} our own charges &c, and warned us solemnly, but affectionately of the consequences of persisting in our present course. We thanked her for her solicitude on our behalf, for we had no doubt of her sincerity; we did not attempt to justify ourselves, but committed our cause to Friends who knew our hearts.

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We went to Mass & spent one year. Whilst we were residing
in D. Stetson's in the fall - he had friends who were of
our lodgings to bring his niece, who was an abolitionist, to see
us, she was then on a visit to him. S. J. May at whose house
we were staying, pressed him to come in & see us, but he
refused. We heard that this friend had said some hard
things ^{about} ~~of~~ us, & that when asked why he did not
take us to lecture, as we were members of his Society - he replied
that was the very reason why he would not go, he would
rather go to his kindred than us. His niece was a very
sincere, united & devoted Abolitionist, & it really grieved her to
see him so set against us & she would not be satisfied till
I went to go to his house with her. I did so, for I was sure he
~~had been prejudiced against us by some Phila influence.~~
Hold him in the outset just what I had heard. He had said
about us, "I did not come because I knew he had hard feelings
towards us, for I wanted to know why he felt thus to an entire
stranger. He seemed astonished at my free words & free words
& rather ashamed, but willing to hear me. I was unexpectedly
to myself the Lord opened my mouth & I threw before him
some of the exercises of my mind previous to my entering
in the work in which I was engaged. Of these I can never speak,
or write or think without tears, & my fattering voice betrayed
the deep emotion of my soul. His heart was moved, the
tear stood in his eye, & he expressed great surprise at
my statements, & said he had had no idea I had ever passed
through any such conflicts. I then enquired whether it
had been right for him to condemn a stranger without
enquiring somewhat respecting her, & remarked "I never
know how I had not done this thing of myself - all thy
better feelings condemn the course thou hadst pursued towards

us. My mind must have been influenced by some one - is it not so." Yes said he, I will tell them just how it was. Paul Marshall of Phil^a was here a few weeks ago, & told me that friends of P. wished New England friends to do all they could to discourage you, for that you had come out against their advice & they thought you were doing very wrong. He told him neither of us had any acquaintance with P. H.

We talked an hour or more & he then parted with me in a far different spirit from that in which he met me, and I went on my way rejoicing in the sweet consciousness of my Father's smiles. When it was expected that we would lecture in Boston, application was made for Friends meeting house, but it could not be obtained for us. Indeed so opposed to Abolitionism were E. England friends, that the Yearly meeting held at Newport in the Spring of 37 assumed an authority over all the meeting houses in New England & recommended them to be closed.

On our return to Phil^a at the time of P's marriage, three friends out of all those who had professed so much love to us, & had formerly paid us so much attention, called to see us. Among these was C. W. Morris with whom I had lived 12 years & towards whom I had acted the part of a daughter & faithful nurse in several severe attacks of illness.

Of all our intimate female acquaintances, not one came, some of our older friends, Ministers & Elders & had called us children & treated us as such; many of the younger as brothers & sisters, but so greatly did they dread giving any countenance to Abolitionism, that with one consent they avoided us. ~~so through the plague spot was upon us.~~ Except from this account two of our friends who were Abolitionists, & whose hearts have cleared even closer to us on account of our A. S. principles, & an elderly friend who was

in affliction & therefore could not be expected to come.
 To G. M. with whom, as I mentioned before, I had lived
 12 years & A. 4. or 5, has never since I left her house to go to
 N. Y. said to either of us "When thou comest to Phil^a make
 my house thy home". How dear C. I believe the friend is
 acting conscientiously - she thinks I am persuaded, that
 her duty as a Dealer requires that she should thus deny
 us the rights of hospitality. We are thankful, that the
 treatment we have met with from Friends, has not
 lessened our regard for them, or our gratitude for
 their past kindness, & we intend when we go to Phil^a
 to attend the Convention of women next month, to go and
 see a number of those with whom we used to be intimate,
 just as though nothing had happened, for we know
 we have done nothing to deserve the withdrawal of
 their love & confidence. — End of Narrative.

I will add a few other items which throw light upon
 the feelings of friends. Formerly there were meetings held
 by friends in Phil^a for coloured persons, how long this
 practice has been abandoned I cannot say, nor what
 were the reasons assigned, but to my mind it clearly
 indicated the decline of those feelings of interest in the
 coloured people which have been decreasing for many
 years, & I apprehend would have passed away altogether,
 but for the impetus given to the public mind, of which
 they could not help partaking, by the movements of
 abolitionists. To this I subscribe the addresses issued by
 our meetings. A few years ago, the meeting for Sufferings
 in London addressed a circular to the meetings for
 Sufferings in the U. S.; it was a feeling & Christian re-
 monstrance on the subject of Slavery, setting forth its

In a letter dated 3rd Mo: 19. 1879 — Says — "Today
application was made ~~to~~ for the Society House
through the Preparative meeting

simplicity & the duties of Friends in relation to it, they
 pleaded earnestly & affectionately with us to come up to
 the work. ~~I although a perfectly willing under a feeling
 of pain that they should come at the price of their brethren
 on this side the Atlantic, yet it was a valuable document~~
 I attended to stir us up to feel & to labour for the slave.
 The reception of this epistle was kept a profound secret
 in Phila., & so far as I know in all the meetings for Suffolk.
 The first we heard of it was through the Liberator when
 it was published I think quite a year after it was received
 in time for holding the Women's Convention being held,
 Abolitionists in Phila. determined to apply for the use
 of friends meeting houses ~~(through the Proprietors)~~
 The written request was laid upon the table by an
 Elder, friend to whom it was handed. The clerk estimated
 the purport of the paper, & after a short discussion it was
 decided to return it to the presenter without reading it.
 John Paul proposed that a com. be appointed to con-
 sider the communication, but to no purpose - Samuel
 Leitch who had given the paper to the clerk, came to
 lay on the table, finding that he was likely to incur
 censure for so doing, & for the first time opened his
 lips in meeting & explained what the paper was, & from
 whom it came, stating that he had brought it
 at the meeting Thomas Robson ^{from England} went to S. L. enquired his
 name & shook hands with him, remarking there was a
 difference of opinion among friends, but he hoped he
 would not be discouraged. Another friend writes "the
 application for friends meeting houses of course proved
 unavailing. I do not think the request was read in any

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of the orthodox meetings except the one kind mentioned,
in that as much was said about it. ~~It goes to show~~
~~which belongs to the Friends' friends, & any more in~~
~~favor of the application, that by no other way possibly~~
~~it may be obtained.~~ [In a letter received lately
from a young man in Burlington, New Jersey, to whom
I had written, recommending that a petition should be got
up there for the abolition of slavery in this state, where
2000 human beings are still held as chattels, although
N. J. claims to be a free state, & in asking to him that
friends could have no objection to signing such a
petition he says "Friends will not sign a petition to our
legislature for the abolition of slavery in this state, their
laws & habits & interests ^{seem} ~~are~~ closed against the slave, and
I am almost ready at times to give up" - He probably
came to this conclusion without having made an effort
by actually presenting a petition, which I think abolitionists
ought to do, & which I shall advise him to do next winter.

That the part friends have taken on the subject
of abolition has been construed by the pro-slavery party
as approbatory of slavery, or at least as showing abolitionists
for their measures, & thus casting their influence on
the side of the oppressor, may be inferred from the
charges in which they speak of Friends, & the high
compliments they lavish upon us. I will send in a few
weeks a package, in it "Whittier's Letter", "Henry Clay's
speech to the Society of Friends", also the "Memorial" con-
taining a disclaimer issued at the time of the burning
of Pennsylvania Hall. Sent from a Southern paper some
remarks approving of this disclaimer, & expressing that friends

The House of Representatives

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were opposed to the Abolitionists, but I cannot now lay my
hand on it - In a pro-slavery work recently published in
Philadelphia "Abolition, a Seditious" by a "Northern Man" there
is a chapter entitled "The example of Quakers or Society of Friends".
The author is manifestly ignorant of the early history of
Friends. He supposes they have always been as silent as
they now are. He says "they (the Quakers) have always been
known as the opponents of slavery, but they have never
broken the public peace in this conflict of principle,
they have never outraged public feeling by obtruding
their opinions in a violent way, they have not sought
to raise mobs against themselves & thus got the advantage
of a cry of persecution." "We hope if any of them have
got out of the way into the Abolition ranks under their
present flag, they will see the propriety of getting back
again as fast as they can for the good reputation of
their own society, that hereafter there may be no exception
among them as a good example worthy of imitation in
all such matters" - The Ch^{urch} is interlarded with encomiums
on the Quakers for their love of peace &c. &c. - The chief
argument against any abolitionism, if such it may be
called, used by my brother, Judge of the Supreme Court in
Ohio, is based upon the fact that Friends are opposed to
the measures of the abolitionists. It is my deliberate conviction
that, as a body, Friends are standing in the way of emancipation
in this country, & sweetening the chains of the slave by throwing
the weight of their influence on the side of the slave-holder.
I send two papers containing something relative to Va being a
slave raising state. I have been obliged for want of room to
write without making any separate paragraphs -

I am
Unity S. M. G.



Phil^a, December, 1837.

Esteemed Friend,

Your favour of the 9th came safe to hand. It needed no apology. The fact of your being an Abolitionist; the friend of my beloved sisters Sarah & Angelina Grimké's; the friend of my poor & oppressed brethren & sisters, entitles you to my warmest gratitude & esteem. I thank God that he has incited you to renounce error, & strengthened you to come up to the help of the Lord against the mighty. I pray that you may run the race set before you, without halting; keeping your eye ^{steadfastly} fixed on the great captain of our salvation. — The questions you ask me, make me feel my weakness, & in view of the great responsibility that rests upon me in answering them, my flesh trembles, yet will I cast my burden on Him, who is strength in weakness, & resolve to do my duty; to tell the truth & leave the consequences to God. I thank you for the "allusion to a member of the Society of Friends". I can set my seal to the truth of the following paragraphs, extracted from it, — "It will be allowed that the Negro pew or its equivalent, may be found in some of our meeting houses, where men & women, brethren & sisters by creation, & heirs of the same glorious immortality, are seated by themselves on a back bench, for no other reason but because it has pleased God to give them a complexion darker than our own." And as you request to know particularly about such a meeting, I may say that the experience of years has

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... on our side this fact, that there is a bench set apart, ~~into~~ that
meeting for our people, whether officially appointed or not I can-
not say; but this I am free to say, that my Mother & myself
were told to sit there, & that a friend sat at each end of the
bench to prevent white persons from sitting there. I had
even when a child, my soul was made sad by hearing
five or six times, during the course of our meeting, this
language of remonstrance addressed to those who were
willing to sit by us, "This bench is for the black people,"
"This bench is for the people of colour" - and often times
I felt, at other times I felt indignant & queried in my
own mind, are these people Christians? Now it seems
clear to me, that had not this bench been set apart for
oppressed Americans, there would have been no necessity
for the oft repeated & gallant remonstrance, getting indeed
because I believe they deserve no for our colour. There was
been in Arch. St. meeting for four years; but my Mother
goes once a week, & frequently she has a whole long bench
to herself. The assertion that our people who attend these
meetings, prefer sitting by themselves, is not true. A very
near friend of ours, that fears God, & who has been a
constant attendee of Friends meetings from his childhood,
says, "How must I tell Wm. Basset that I know that Friends
appointed a seat for our people at the meeting which I attend.
Several years ago, a friend came to me & said, that
"Friends" had appointed the back bench for us. I told
him with some warmth that I had just as ^{soon} sit on
the floor as sit there, I do not care about it, Friends do
not do the thing that is right. Judge now I pray you,

whether this man, professed sitting by himself. I do ~~not~~ ^{not} of the person. I have just mentioned, have left attending friend's meetings within the last few months, because they could no longer endure the "scorning of those that are at ease, & the contempt of the poor". "Conversing with one of them to day I asked, 'Why did you leave Friends?' 'Because they do not know how to treat me, I do not like to sit on a back bench & be treated with contempt, so I go where I am better treated'. 'Do you not like their principles, their mode of worship?' 'Yes, I like their principles, but not their practice; they make the highest profession of any sect of Christians, & are the most deficient in practice.' - In reply to your question, whether there appears to be a diminution of prejudice towards ^{us} among Friends, I immediately answer, no. I have heard it frequently remarked I have observed it myself, that in proportion as we become intellectual & respectable, so in proportion does their disgust & prejudice increase.

Yet while I speak thus of Friends as a body, I am happy to say that there is in this city a noble few who have cleansed their garments from the foul stain of prejudice, & are doing all their hands find to do in promoting the moral & mental ^{elevation} ~~sublevation~~ of oppressed Americans. Some of these are members of Anti Slavery Societies, & others belong to the old Abolition School.

While I have been ^{penning} ~~forming~~ this letter, living desires have sprung up in my soul that I might "nothing estimate, nor set down as not in public". [Sorrowless we know that our beloved A. C. C. is consoling. I'd all the members Friends Society, feel for us, as the sisters Grimké do, how soon, how very soon, would the fetters be stricken from the captive & cruel prejudice be driven from the bosoms of the professed

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followers of Christ! We ~~were~~ ^{were} being ~~confronted~~ ^{confronted} & bleeding, & trampled
to the very dust by the heel of our brethren. Your sisters, when
Sarah & Angelina Quimble passed by; they saw our low estate,
& their hearts melted within them; with the tenderness of
ministerial regards they lifted us from the dust & poured
the oil of consolation. The talen of silver, put into our hands
by them, they identified themselves with us, took our wrongs
upon them, & made our oppressions ^{their} theirs. Is it hard
marvel then that we love them as our own souls, & that we
call them blessed among women? We value them, not
because they belong to the great & mighty of our land, but
because they love Christ & our afflicted brethren. Most
cordially do we approve every step they have taken. Since they
left us, believing that the unerring spirit of truth is their
leader & friend - I hope this letter may be satisfactory to
you. Use it & the account of my brother in any way you
may think proper, but do not give my name unless it
is absolutely necessary. Please tell our beloved A. C. G. that
her friends entreat her not to exert herself until she is
quite strong. May the Lord bless you, and may you anchor
your little bark on the rock Christ Jesus, that so, when the
storm of persecution arises, you may suffer no loss.
Prays fervently
++++

As much as 80 or 90 years ago a coloured man who was
a member of Lynn (Mass) meeting, felt it his duty to open
his lips in the ministry, he was a spiritually-minded
man; he was requested by the address to be silent & he
complied for a while, but the word of the Lord was as a fire



